towers. Assimilation of such vast amount of data into operational numerical weather prediction models is an important steps to improve the prediction of monsoons and aderse extreme weather events. Better understanding of the atmospheric processes will also help the disaster mitigation acivities for events such as cyclone, drought, and cloudbursts with timely early warning.

Manned mission to moon

3939. PROF. P.J. KURIEN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether India propose to send a satellite to the moon;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it also included sending a man to the moon;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Chandrayaan-1 is India's first unmanned mission to moon with scientific objective of high resolution mapping of topographic features and the study of the mineralogical composition of the lunar surface. The spacecraft will orbit moon at an altitude of 100 km to be launched in 2008 using PSLV. The mission is expected to have an operational life of about 2 years.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) The technologies related to manned mission are yet to be developed.

Indian mission to moon

3940. SHRI SURENDRA LATH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the first Indian moon mission Chandrayaan-1 was approved in 2003;

(b) if so, the progress, so far, made therein; and

(c) whether any renewed efforts are being made in view of international interest on moon for establishing stations on the moon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Development of the Chandrayaan-1 spacecraft and scientific instruments are progressing satisfactorily for a scheduled launch during 2008. Design reviews of all payloads have been completed. Spacecraft integration has commenced. Establishment of deep space network is progressing as per scheduled.

(c) At present we do not have any specific plan for establishing a lunar observatory. However, Chandrayaan-1 will provide valuable inputs in establishing such stations at a later date, if required.

Launch of Italian satellite

†3941. SHRI MANOHAR JOSHI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether by succeeding in clinching a global bid for satellite launch of Italy and launching Italian satellite 'Agile' through PSLV-C8 rocket into its orbit India has established its excellence in the field of commercial launching in global market;

(b) if so, whether India has secured place alongside US, Russia, China and France in the field of commercial launch of satellites and the likely opportunities in near future; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir. The capacity on PSLV is being offered to international customs, after meeting our national needs.

(c) Agreements have been signed for launching three other foreign satellites.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.